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Security Council

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Letter dated 15 April 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

As requested by the Security Council in its resolution 2279 (2016), I have the honour to transmit options for the deployment of a United Nations police contribution to increase the United Nations capacity to monitor the security situation, promote the respect of human rights and advance the rule of law, in compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy (see annex).

I should be grateful if you could bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN Ki-moon**

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Annex

Options for the deployment of a United Nations police contribution

1. By its resolution 2279 (2016), the Security Council requested me to present within 15 days, in consultation with the Government of Burundi and in coordination with the African Union, options for the deployment of a United Nations police contribution to increase the United Nations capacity to monitor the security situation, promote the respect of human rights and advance the rule of law, in compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy.

United Nations engagement in Burundi

2. In response to the political crisis in Burundi, in November 2015 the Security Council adopted resolution 2248 (2015), in which the Council requested me, inter alia, to update the Security Council within 15 days, including by presenting options on the future presence of the United Nations in Burundi, and then regularly on the situation in Burundi, in particular on security and on violations and abuses of human rights and incitement to violence or hatred against different groups in Burundian society. The Council also invited me to deploy a team in Burundi to coordinate and work with the Government of Burundi, the African Union and other partners to assess the situation and develop options to address political and security concerns.

3. Pursuant to resolution 2248 (2015), I submitted a letter dated 1 December 2015 to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/926), in which I outlined options for the future United Nations presence in Burundi. The options included the deployment of a multidimensional integrated peacekeeping operation under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and a fully-fledged integrated special political mission. In the same letter, I informed the President that I would proceed with the deployment of a support team to my Special Adviser, as mandated by the Council in paragraph 7 of resolution 2248 (2015).

4. In its resolution 2279 (2016), the Security Council requested me to enhance the United Nations engagement in Burundi by strengthening the team of my Special Adviser in order to work with the Government of Burundi and other concerned stakeholders to support the inter-Burundian dialogue, as referred to in paragraph 5 of the resolution, and in the areas of security and rule of law.

5. The existing United Nations political engagement in Burundi aims at peacefully resolving the current political crisis in the country. Any United Nations police contribution would be in support of that effort. The objective of a United Nations police contribution would therefore be to help to create an environment conducive to political dialogue by averting a further deterioration of the security situation and decreasing the occurrence of human rights violations.

6. A United Nations police contribution would be an integral part of the United Nations political strategy and could have implications for the type of future United Nations presence in Burundi, the options therefor I outlined in my letter of 1 December 2015.

Context

7. A credible and inclusive dialogue process remains the only way to peacefully resolve the current crisis in Burundi. So far, however, there has been no tangible

progress in launching such a process. The political situation in the country therefore remains at an impasse. In this regard, I have welcomed as an encouraging development the appointment by the East African Community of the former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa, as facilitator to support the mediation efforts of the East African Community under the leadership of the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni. I also take note of the request in paragraph 7 of resolution 2279 (2016) for the United Nations, through the good offices of my Special Adviser, to support the inter-Burundian dialogue, as referred to in paragraph 5 of the resolution, and in that regard to coordinate and work with the East African Community-led, African Union-endorsed Mediator and his Facilitator, as well as with the high-level delegation from the African Union, and to provide technical and substantive support to the mediation.

8. Since the onset of the political crisis early in 2015, there have been numerous reports of serious human rights violations by the security forces, including the National Police of Burundi, the military and intelligence services, members of the Imbonerakure youth group and unidentified armed movements. The security situation in Burundi remains alarmingly precarious. Although incidents of hand grenade attacks on public venues peaked late in February, attacks targeting military and police personnel, including assassinations and abductions, have increased. Sporadic attacks by armed groups have also continued.

9. While extrajudicial killings have declined in the past two months, reports indicate a rising trend in enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests, illegal detention and ill-treatment and torture. A sharp deterioration in the security situation, with serious implications for the human rights situation, intercommunal cohesion and regional stability, remains a persistent risk. Reports of human rights violations and abuses, including those committed during security and cordon and search operations and in the wake of incidents of public disorder, have increasingly undermined public confidence in the role of the national police in maintaining the rule of law and prompted allegations by some of an ongoing politicization of policing.

10. Established in 2004 by the merger of several security institutions and the integration of former members of the Burundian armed forces and other armed groups, the police force expanded from 2,000 to 18,000 service personnel. The large size of the force, the incomplete integration of a large number of former combatants and the force's limited organizational and operational capacity have hampered the establishment of democratic civilian oversight. Weak internal accountability mechanisms hinder both the identification and the sanctioning of misconduct, contributing to a pattern of impunity.

Consultations with the Government of Burundi

11. My Special Adviser has held extensive consultations with the Government of Burundi on options for a United Nations police contribution. In addition to the consultations with my Special Adviser, the Government has made its views known in two written communications: a letter dated 7 April 2016 (see enclosure I) and a letter addressed to me from the Permanent Representative of Burundi dated 13 April 2016 (see S/2016/344, annex). In the letter of 7 April, the Government expressed its reservations with regard to any "international armed presence", adding that the Government and the people of Burundi would not be in agreement with any large armed United Nations police presence. In the letter of 13 April, it is stated that the

Government was ready to receive on its soil around 20 unarmed police experts to provide support to the Burundian national police and welcomed United Nations support in the form of logistics and, above all, capacity-building in 13 specified areas.

Coordination with the African Union

12. Pursuant to the request of the Security Council and in response to a note verbale dated 6 April from the Secretariat, the African Union Commission, in a note verbale dated 11 April 2016, emphasized the need for close coordination and collaboration between the African Union human rights observers and military/security experts and any United Nations police contribution in Burundi. Against that background, the African Union requested that the Secretariat consider modalities through which the United Nations would assist the African Union in completing the deployment of and providing support to its human rights observers and military/security experts so that the strength agreed upon with the Government of Burundi could be reached. It also specified that such support could include communications and other equipment, mobility and co-location, which would maximize the use of available resources as well as facilitate mandate implementation. A copy of the note verbale is provided in enclosure II.

Strategic objective and tasks for the deployment of a United Nations police contribution

13. Considering the stalled political process and persisting political tensions, the prevailing low-intensity conflict and the fluid threat environment, targeted human rights violations and continued displacement of the population, a United Nations police contribution should be viewed as contributing to a preventive effort aimed at mitigating the risk of further deterioration. The deployment would enhance United Nations capacity to maintain situational awareness; deepen analysis of the security situation and promote respect for human rights; and inform continued contingency planning and any future review of the United Nations strategy for Burundi. Information, including on potential sources of conflict and risks of atrocity crimes, would be reported systematically to the Security Council in a timely manner to enable the Council to respond to any further deterioration of the situation in Burundi, as a form of deterrence and prevention. But a police deployment cannot be a substitute for political engagement aimed at launching a credible and inclusive dialogue process.

14. It is important to acknowledge what can and cannot be achieved with any United Nations police contribution. The key shortcomings of the national police cannot be resolved without addressing the underlying political problems, which relate to how governance is exercised in the country, including in the area of security. For this reason, previous efforts aimed at police reform have had a limited impact. Recently, international efforts to provide technical assistance to the police have been suspended by key donors. Addressing the political and rule of law issues requires strengthening legal frameworks and an independent judiciary, enhancing civilian democratic oversight mechanisms, ensuring accountability for serious human rights violations and instilling an institutional culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law, all of which will have to be considered further within the context of broader international support to strengthen justice and security sector governance. The building of the national police as an impartial, professional and

reliable police service, with sustainable systems and processes, is a long-term undertaking that requires strong political will from the Government and needs to be addressed in a broader rule of law context.

15. The deployment of a police contribution would build on the African Union deployment and would be progressive and scalable in scope. The deployment should form part of an overall response of the international community to address the crisis in Burundi, which includes contingency planning, the modalities of which are updated regularly. Any significant deterioration of or improvement in the situation would require a change of strategy and transformation of the international response, including the United Nations presence on the ground. However, the deployment would not be sufficient to resolve the crisis. It would have a very limited effect on public order management and would not be able to provide an adequate protection of civilians response in the absence of a more robust mandate to use all necessary means.

16. Full cooperation of the Government, as well as other national stakeholders, would be a precondition for the success of any police contribution, including with regard to access throughout the country to relevant facilities, such as detention centres and courts, and access to relevant stakeholders, as required.

17. The deployment of United Nations police personnel would require an updated security risk assessment, on the basis of which the requirements for ensuring the safety and security of the personnel and installations would be determined. On the basis of prior United Nations experience, this could potentially include the deployment of additional United Nations uniformed personnel, notwithstanding and without prejudice to the responsibility of the Government to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel and installations.

18. In line with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy, United Nations support to uniformed State authorities would require an assessment of the risks involved in providing or not providing such support, in particular, the risk of the law enforcement agencies committing grave violations of human rights law. Under the current circumstances, reputational risks arising from a perceived association of United Nations police personnel working alongside national authorities would also need to be seriously considered.

Tasks

19. In accordance with the functions identified in resolution 2279 (2016) for a United Nations police contribution, the three interrelated lines of activity to be performed by United Nations police personnel are set out below. In performing the tasks, United Nations police personnel would work in close cooperation with the existing United Nations presence, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), as well as the African Union. The lines of activity are:

(a) Monitor the security situation:

(i) Monitor police and other law enforcement agencies;

(ii) Monitor security incidents and human rights violations in close cooperation with United Nations human rights monitors;

(iii) Collect, verify and analyse information in its areas of operation;

(iv) Generate reliable situational awareness;

(v) Report on any restrictions of the police contribution's freedom of movement or other impediments to the fulfilment of its mandate;

(b) Promote respect for human rights:

(i) Participate in collecting information on human rights violations, in coordination with OHCHR;

(ii) Support OHCHR in investigating security incidents and human rights violations;

(iii) Mentor and advise the National Police of Burundi in accordance with the activities permitted under paragraph 9 of the United Nations human rights due diligence policy and engage with civil society, particularly members of vulnerable groups;

(c) Advance the rule of law:

(i) Investigate security incidents and human rights violations (including the provision of specialized investigative expertise on forensics, DNA and firearms);

(ii) Training of the National Police of Burundi in accordance with activities permitted under paragraph 9 of the United Nations human rights due diligence policy;

(iii) Monitor prosecutions and court proceedings;

(iv) Monitor detention facilities, conditions and legality of detention and treatment of detainees.

20. The extent to which these functions can be executed will be dictated by the size and scope of the option selected, the quality of the personnel deployed and the support of the national authorities. Advancing the rule of law or monitoring detention facilities and court proceedings will require highly skilled specialists.

21. In accordance with resolution 2279 (2016), any United Nations police advisory, training or other capacity-building functions would include activities that are intended to promote the compliance of the National Police of Burundi with human rights law, subject to a risk assessment, as noted in paragraph 18 above, to ensure compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy, such as:

(a) Training or sensitization of the personnel of the National Police of Burundi on international humanitarian and human rights law;

(b) Advice on and review of Burundi's legislation and codes and policies of the National Police of Burundi to strengthen its implementation of and compliance with human rights laws and standards and to foster democratic governance;

(c) Capacity support to establish effective internal and external accountability mechanisms of the National Police of Burundi to combat impunity for serious human rights abuses;

(d) Engagement with the National Police of Burundi to promote compliance with humanitarian, human rights and refugee law or negotiate humanitarian access and carry out relief operations.

Options for a police contribution to the United Nations presence

22. The options set out below present the Security Council with a range of possibilities for a United Nations police contribution, which differ considerably in their impact, scale, focus and degree of reputational risk to the Organization. The options could also be considered as a phased deployment, depending on the evolving situation on the ground. Subject to a decision by the Council on any of the below options, further detailed planning on the exact size, composition and reporting arrangements, as well as rigorous risk assessments, including a security risk assessment, would be required. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the below options, guarantees of security and access, including unimpeded access for police and civilian monitors to places of detention and individual detainees, should be requested by the Council and provided by the Government of Burundi.

Option 1: United Nations police protection and monitoring presence

23. The first option would be a police deployment, which, in addition to the three key tasks set out in paragraph 19 above, would provide visible patrolling, including in hotspot areas, and an expanded monitoring and investigation range and produce regular reports to the Security Council. The police contribution would include formed police units. However, any meaningful contribution by formed police units to public order management through support to national counterparts may not be possible in the current context, in compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy. Enabling the units to take action to protect civilians unilaterally would therefore require an executive policing mandate until such time as operational support to the national law enforcement agencies was possible under the human rights due diligence policy. In addition, formed police units are not equipped to respond to military-type threats, including from armed groups.

24. Subject to a more detailed assessment, this option envisages the deployment of approximately 3,000 police personnel, including those in formed police units. It should be reinforced by a small rule-of-law element, as indicated in paragraph 20 above. The presence would deploy and operate in parallel with the African Union and the existing United Nations presence in Burundi, requiring close coordination to ensure coherence. This deployment is the only option that could provide some degree of physical protection to the population against increased threats.

25. A United Nations police presence of this size would require considerable resources and lead time to generate such a high number of police personnel, particularly officers with the appropriate language skills and the specialized expertise needed to execute the functions outlined in paragraph 19 above. On the basis of previous experience, it would take months or longer to generate this contribution. An appropriate Security Council mandate, the consent of the Government of Burundi to deploy and the Government's continued cooperation to ensure the necessary access would be required.

Option 2: United Nations police monitoring presence

26. The second option would be the deployment of United Nations individual police officers, together with the OHCHR presence in Burundi. They would perform the three interrelated lines of activity set out in paragraph 19. The United Nations police personnel would be deployed in Bujumbura and four existing United Nations regional offices (Bujumbura Rural, Gitega, Ngozi and Makamba) to allow coverage of all 18 provinces in Burundi with a view to ensuring sufficient situational awareness and early warning capacity.

27. In order to maximize the United Nations capacity to promote respect for human rights, the police deployment should be combined with an increased OHCHR presence on the ground to step up efforts to monitor, report and follow up on human rights violations, as well as rule-of-law specialists, as indicated in paragraph 20 above. Coordination with and support for the work of other entities, in particular the African Union, would be critical, in full respect of their respective mandates.

28. A further possibility under this option is for the United Nations police contribution to be co-located with the African Union human rights observers and military experts (current approved strength is 100 each) to leverage existing capacities and comparative advantages. The establishment of a small police and civilian capacity would be required to process and analyse the information collected, as well as a small planning capacity to plan for contingencies in case of a deterioration of the situation on the ground or a possible scaling-up of the United Nations engagement based on progress in the political process.

29. Subject to a more detailed assessment, this option envisages the deployment of 228 United Nations police personnel working together with the OHCHR office in Burundi and possibly co-located with the African Union deployment. This option could expand progressively to include the deployment of more police personnel as the situation warrants.

30. This option is likely to have a positive impact on the situational awareness of the United Nations and provide early warning capacity to enable national, regional and international stakeholders to address emerging security and human rights concerns. It would not provide any physical protection to the population. It carries considerable risk for the United Nations, including exposure to a higher threat level, and it would not respond to possible public expectations of protection.

Option 3: United Nations police assessment presence

31. The third option is a smaller deployment with a focus on strategic engagement with and assessment of the National Police of Burundi. The presence would assess the operational and institutional limitations of the national police, oversight weaknesses and issues of accountability, and would identify strategies for future United Nations police engagement. It would provide a detailed diagnostic of the shortfalls of the national police and an analysis of entry points and recommendations for a potential further United Nations police contribution. In doing this, the police presence would use its contacts within the national police and other government entities to help to bring about concrete and measurable improvements in the area of respect for human rights and the rule of law by State authorities, in particular the national police. On the basis of the recommendations, a scalable and phased deployment could be envisioned in the future, subject to the

appropriate Security Council mandate and the consent of the Government. This option would initially be deployed for three months, after which I would report back to the Council, or earlier should a deterioration of the security situation so require, in order to provide the Council with the information necessary to reassess the security and human rights situation and the configuration of the United Nations police contribution on the ground.

32. With a light footprint of between 20 and 50 police personnel, this option would entail only a limited and periodic presence outside the capital region and could only provide a limited capacity to fulfil the three lines of activity outlined in resolution 2279 (2016). However, it has the advantage of flexibility and swift deployment. The reputational risks associated with United Nations police personnel focusing on engagement with the Burundian police, which could be perceived as partial, would need to be assessed and mitigating measures identified. This option would also not respond to expectations to provide protection.

Support implications

33. United Nations support arrangements in Burundi are currently configured to support a small Bujumbura-based presence of the Office of the Special Adviser. Under the options proposed, this support platform would need to be strengthened and, for two of the options, significantly so.

34. As a landlocked country with correspondingly long supply lines, Burundi presents a logistical challenge. At a minimum, and depending on the prevailing security situation, the first two options would require the identification and preparation of multiple new locations around the country to accommodate an expanded presence, including the provision of offices, transportation, communications, information technology and medevac capacity.

35. Should formed police units be authorized, the scope of requirements would expand significantly to include the full range of support services and capacities normally associated with them, including a camp construction and maintenance programme, the delivery of rations and fuel, strategic airlifts, vehicle maintenance and reimbursements for contingent-owned equipment and personnel. The development of infrastructure for an expanded formed police presence, as proposed in option 1, in multiple locations would imply a long lead time and would need to be phased, along with police generation timelines. In addition, centralized capacities in Bujumbura would need to be strengthened, including medical facilities, warehousing and a logistics base, contract oversight and administrative functions. Back-office support would continue to be provided by the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, with capacities calibrated in accordance with the option proposed.

36. In leveraging the capacities and comparative advantages of the African Union, OHCHR and a possible United Nations police contribution, I have considered the request of the African Union and believe that it is important to the broader success of our collective efforts that the efforts of the African Union should be reinforced by predictable and sustainable operational support. The Security Council could consider mandating the United Nations to provide targeted logistical support to the African Union, in addition to establishing a United Nations police contribution. If requested to do so, the Secretariat would develop proposals on the most appropriate means of supporting these distinct but related presences in line with United Nations

standards and practices and in strict compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy.

Conclusion

37. As the Security Council considers the above options for a United Nations police contribution, I will proceed with strengthening the team of my Special Adviser, as requested by the Council in paragraph 10 of resolution 2279 (2016), in order to work with the Government of Burundi and other concerned stakeholders to support the inter-Burundian dialogue, as referred to in paragraph 5 of the resolution, and in the areas of security and rule of law.

Enclosure I

[Original: French]

Letter dated 7 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of Burundi wishes to reiterate its willingness to cooperate fully with the United Nations country team in Burundi and with the new and dynamic team led by your Special Adviser, Mr. Jamal Benomar, some members of which are already working on the ground in Bujumbura.

I should like to take this ideal opportunity to take due note of the offer to deploy a United Nations police contribution, contained in paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 2279 (2016), unanimously adopted on 1 April 2016, which refers explicitly to options to be formulated in consultation with the Government of Burundi.

In that connection, the Government of Burundi remains at your disposal, through your Special Adviser, to discuss and agree on the nature, size and duties of this United Nations police presence in Burundi. In this regard, as I reminded the Security Council on 1 April 2016 when resolution 2279 (2016) was adopted, and, most importantly, wish to recall now once again, the Government of Burundi emphasizes that the option of an unarmed international presence was among the recommendations of the most recent Summit of Heads of State of the African Union in Addis Ababa, the high-level delegation of the African Union composed of five Presidents that visited Bujumbura on 25 and 26 March 2016, the meeting of the Committee of Defence Ministers of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, held on 10 February 2016 in Luanda, and the Government of Burundi, through the country's parliament, acting on behalf of its electorate.

These national, regional and continental stakeholders have all expressed their opposition to a large, international armed presence in Burundi and their preference for the deployment of unarmed experts and human rights observers. It is solely this unarmed option, which is the choice of the African Union, the region and the Government of Burundi, that we intend to discuss with your team in more detail, in a spirit of openness and, above all, with strict adherence to the sacrosanct principle of the national sovereignty of Burundi, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to which Burundi subscribes. Should any large, armed police presence be deployed by the United Nations, this will be without the agreement of the Government of Burundi and its people; it constitutes our red line, as reiterated by His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza during the talks held in Bujumbura on 23 April 2016.

It should be remembered that Burundi has worked closely with the United Nations since achieving independence in 1962 with the invaluable support of the Organization. The Government of Burundi will of course continue to cooperate constructively with the United Nations and its teams in Bujumbura. We must continue to work more closely in a spirit of openness to consolidate peace and stability in our country and the region with a view to securing a better and more stable future for our country.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) Albert **Shingiro**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Enclosure II

Note verbale dated 11 April 2016 from the African Union Commission

The Commission of the African Union presents its compliments to the United Nations Office to the African Union in Addis Ababa, and has the honour to acknowledge receipt of the note verbale of 6 April 2016 regarding the situation in Burundi.

The Commission wishes to welcome the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2279 (2016) on 1 April 2016. Building on the earlier pronouncements of the Security Council on the situation in Burundi, including in Council resolution 2248 (2015) of 12 November 2015, this resolution marks a new and significant step in the efforts of the international community aimed at facilitating the search for an early and lasting solution to the crisis facing Burundi.

The Commission notes the provisions of paragraph 5 of resolution 2279 (2016), in which the Security Council urged the Government of Burundi and all stakeholders committed to a peaceful solution, both those who are in Burundi and those outside the country, to extend full cooperation to the East African Community-led and African Union-endorsed Mediator and his Facilitator in order to urgently agree on a timetable and on a list of participants of an inclusive and genuine inter-Burundian dialogue, and highlighted the importance of the decision by the African Union Peace and Security Council to hold such a dialogue outside Burundi, in a venue to be determined by the mediation. This reinforces the repeated calls by the Peace and Security Council for the early convening of a truly inclusive and genuine inter-Burundian dialogue to overcome the serious challenges confronting the country, preserve the gains made thanks to the August 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, and lay the foundation for lasting peace, security and stability in Burundi.

The Commission wishes to recall that, in pursuance of the relevant communiqués of the African Union Peace and Security Council, the African Union has deployed to Burundi human rights observers and military experts. They are mandated to, respectively: (a) monitor the human rights situation on the ground, report violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and undertake local conflict prevention and resolution activities; and (b) verify the process of disarming militias and other armed groups. The deployment was undertaken as part of a comprehensive strategy for addressing the challenges at hand in Burundi, as articulated by the Peace and Security Council, including the imperative need for dialogue and full support to the East African Community-led mediation.

To date, the Commission has deployed 32 human rights observers and 15 military experts. Steps are under way to deploy an additional 15 human rights observers and 19 military/security experts (including 6 police officers). The objective is to reach as early as possible a total strength of 200 personnel (100 human rights observers and 100 military/security experts), as agreed upon with the Government of Burundi during the visit of the African Union high-level delegation to Bujumbura, conducted on 25 and 26 February 2016. The Commission notes with satisfaction the support conveyed on a number of occasions by the Security Council for the deployment of the African Union human rights observers and military/security experts.

The Commission notes that, in paragraph 10 of its resolution 2279 (2016), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Government of Burundi and in coordination with the African Union, to present options for the deployment of a United Nations police contribution to increase the United Nations capacity to monitor the security situation, promote the respect of human rights and advance rule of law, in compliance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces. The Commission welcomes the request made by the Council for the options for the deployment of a United Nations police contribution to be presented in coordination with the African Union. The Commission stresses that the objectives outlined in resolution 2279 (2016) are similar to those being pursued by the African Union human rights observers and military/security experts.

In this respect, and as part of the African Union-United Nations partnership in the area of peace and security and consistent with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Commission wishes to underline the need for close coordination and collaboration between the African Union human rights observers and military/security experts and any United Nations police contribution in Burundi. Specific modalities could be identified and agreed upon, building on earlier relevant collaborative and joint endeavours between the two organizations in the area of peace and security.

Against this background, the Commission could be grateful if, within the framework of the options to be submitted to the Security Council, the Secretariat could consider modalities through which the United Nations might assist the African Union in completing the deployment of its human rights observers and military/security experts so that the strength agreed upon with the Government of Burundi can be reached. It is worth highlighting that, in resolution 2279 (2016), the Council called for the full and speedy deployment of the African Union military/security experts and human rights observers.

The Commission would also be grateful if the United Nations could, similarly, give consideration to the provision of support on the ground to the African Union human rights observers and military/security experts. This could include communications and other equipment, mobility and co-location, which would maximize the use of available resources as well as facilitate mandate implementation. Furthermore, the Commission stands ready to examine with the United Nations other modalities for enhanced collaboration and cooperation, including with respect to reporting.

The Commission strongly believes that close collaboration and coordination, as broadly outlined above, will ensure increased international presence; make it possible to more effectively support the Burundian stakeholders in the search for a solution to the challenges confronting their country; and contribute to the creation of conditions conducive to the early holding of the inclusive dialogue called for by the African Union and the United Nations and to be conducted under the auspices of the East African Community. More generally, the proposed collaboration and coordination are in line with the conclusions of the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95-S/2015/446), which called for a deeper and more collaborative partnership between the United Nations and the African Union.

The Commission looks forward to regular updates by the United Nations on the follow-up to the request made by the Security Council in its resolution 2279 (2016). The Commission reiterates its commitment, should the Council agree on a United Nations police presence in Burundi, to identify further practical steps through which the two organizations can enhance their collaboration, including with respect to the generation of police personnel, as part of the promotion of a political solution to the crisis and support to the East African Community-led mediation.